



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/069,329	04/30/2002	Frits Kornelis Feenstra	310.1028	7862

22856 7590 03/22/2004

MUSERLIAN, LUCAS AND MERCANTI, LLP
475 PARK AVENUE SOUTH
NEW YORK, NY 10016

EXAMINER

FIORILLA, CHRISTOPHER A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1731

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/069,329	FEENSTRA, FRITS KORNELIS	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Christopher A. Fiorilla	1731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17, 19 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5/30/02</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

Art Unit: 1731

1. This application does not contain an abstract of the disclosure as required by 37

CFR 1.72(b). An abstract on a separate sheet is required.

2. The following guidelines illustrate the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application. These guidelines are suggested for the applicant's use.

Arrangement of the Specification

As provided in 37 CFR 1.77(b), the specification of a utility application should include the following sections in order. Each of the lettered items should appear in upper case, without underlining or bold type, as a section heading. If no text follows the section heading, the phrase "Not Applicable" should follow the section heading:

- (a) TITLE OF THE INVENTION.
- (b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS.
- (c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT.
- (d) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC (See 37 CFR 1.52(e)(5) and MPEP 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), "Sequence Listings" (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text are permitted to be submitted on compact discs.) or
REFERENCE TO A "MICROFICHE APPENDIX" (See MPEP § 608.05(a). "Microfiche Appendices" were accepted by the Office until March 1, 2001.)
- (e) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION.
 - (1) Field of the Invention.
 - (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
- (f) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION.
- (g) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S).
- (h) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION.
- (i) CLAIM OR CLAIMS (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (j) ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (k) SEQUENCE LISTING (See MPEP § 2424 and 37 CFR 1.821-1.825. A "Sequence Listing" is required on paper if the application discloses a nucleotide or amino acid sequence as defined in 37 CFR 1.821(a) and if the required "Sequence Listing" is not submitted as an electronic document on compact disc).

Art Unit: 1731

3. Claim 18 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot depend from another multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claim 18 has not been further treated on the merits.

4. The use of various trademarks has been noted in this application (e.g. page 7, lines 16-18). They should be capitalized wherever they appear and be accompanied by the generic terminology.

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

5. Claims 1-17, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, the phrase "wherein a three-dimensional printing technique is used" is indefinite in that it is unclear as to how the technique is "used".

A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely

Art Unit: 1731

exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claims 2 and 3 recites the broad recitation "optical scan technique", and the claim also recites "preferably a laser technique" which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

Claims 2 and 3 are identical. One of these claims should be canceled.

In claim 6, the phrase "the binder" has no antecedent basis.

In claim 7, the phrase "the binder" has no antecedent basis in claim 5 on which this claim optionally depends.

In claim 7, the word "consisting" should be inserted after "group" so that the claim contains proper Markush language.

In claim 8, the phrase "the binder" has no antecedent basis.

In claim 8, the word "consisting" should be inserted after "group" so that the claim contains proper Markush language.

In claim 9, the phrase "the powder" has no antecedent basis.

A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by

Art Unit: 1731

raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 9 recites the broad recitation "ceramic materials", and the claim also recites "such as..." which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 9 recites the broad recitation "metals", and the claim also recites "such as alloys of..." which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

In claim 11, the phrase "the powder" has no antecedent basis.

Claim 12 is indefinite in that it recites "powders of a different color are used" but does not describe how they are used.

Art Unit: 1731

Claim 19 is indefinite in that it recites the phrase "additionally shaped" but there is no previous "shaping" step recited in the claims.

6. Claims 1-17, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for a process wherein a powder material is applied to a substrate in layers in conjunction with a binder material, does not reasonably provide enablement for the process as generically claimed. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to practice the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

8. Claims 1,4,5, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Bredt et al. (5,902,441).

Bredt et al. discloses the production of articles such as dental article (col. 1, line 46) by a method which utilizes three dimensional printing.

9. Claims 1-6,9,11 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Brodtkin et al. (6,322,728).

Brodtkin et al. discloses the production of articles such as dental article by a method which utilizes three dimensional printing.

Art Unit: 1731

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 1-6,9-15,17,19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodtkin et al. (6,322,728) in view of Sachs et al. (5,204,055).

Brodtkin et al. discloses the production of articles such as dental articles by a method which utilizes three dimensional printing. The process disclosed by Brodtkin et al. includes the steps of depositing powder layers, spraying binder onto select portion of the powder layers to build up a dental element, and sintering the obtained element.

Brodtkin et al. does not disclose applying the powder layer with a doctor blade, utilizing layers with different compositions and thus different colors.

Sachs et al. discloses applying the powder layer with a doctor blade (e.g. Figure 2A and col. 5, line 19) and utilizing layers with different compositions (e.g. col. 11, lines 17-18 and col.8, lines 42-43).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to utilize these expedients in the process of Sachs et al. to optimize the process.

Determination of the specific sintering parameters (e.g. time and temperature) would have been well within the realm of routine experimentation to one having ordinary skill in the art

Art Unit: 1731

at the time of the invention. These parameters would have obviously been selected to optimize the process conditions and/or the properties of the final product.

It is notoriously well known in the art to reshape dental elements such as crowns by (e.g. grinding) in order to optimize the fit of the crown in the patient. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to reshape a dental element made by the process of Brodtkin et al. to optimize its fit in patient.

12. Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodtkin et al. (6,322,728) in view of Sachs et al. (5,204,055) as applied to claims 1-6,9-15,17,19 and 20 above, and further in view of Yamada et al. (5,641,434).

Yamada et al. discloses that polyvinyl alcohol and acrylate binders are suitable for binding ceramic powders. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use these binders in the process of Brodtkin et al.

13. Claims 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodtkin et al. (6,322,728) in view of Sachs et al. (5,204,055) as applied to claims 1-6,9-15,17,19 and 20 above, and further in view of Ota et al. (4,705,762).


Ota et al. discloses the use of particles less than 50nm in size for producing sintered bodies. Ota et al. discloses that particles of this size have great surface energy and can be sintered at low temperatures. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use particles of this size in the process of Brodtkin et al. to allow for sintering at low temperatures.

Art Unit: 1731

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher A. Fiorilla whose telephone number is (571) 272-1187. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 6:30am-3:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven P. Griffin can be reached on (571) 272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Christopher A. Fiorilla
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1731

caf